



Weekly Drought Brief Monday April 28, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Recent Precipitation: A series of small storms brought rainfall across the upper half of the state and up to two feet of snow in parts of the Sierra Nevada late last week. Precipitation totals from Monday, April 21 through Sunday, April 27:

- **Folsom:** 0.55" in the last week. 15.12" since July 1, **69%** of normal by this date.
- **Fresno:** 0.62" in the last week. 4.88" since July 1, **45%** of normal by this date.
- **Hetch Hetchy:** 1.57" in the last week. 19.50" since July 1, **57%** of normal by this date.
- **Los Angeles:** 0.06" in the last week. 5.82" since July 1, **40%** of normal by this date.
- **Modesto:** 0.36" in the last week. 6.99" since July 1, **57%** of normal by this date.
- **Oroville:** 0.16" in the last week. 19.16" since July 1, **64%** of normal this date.
- **Pollock Pines:** 2.80" in the last week. 27.20" since July 1, **54%** of normal by this date.
- **Redding:** 0.04" in the last week. 21.20" since July 1, **67%** of normal by this date.
- **Sacramento:** 0.66" in the last week. 10.25" since July 1, **51%** of normal by this date.
- **Shasta:** 0.44" in the last week. 34.12" since July 1, **56%** of normal by this date.
- **Willits:** 0.40" in the last week. 34.32" since July 1, **72%** of normal by this date.

Near-term Outlook for Precipitation: Warmer weather will occur across the state this week with no expected precipitation.

** It is possible that last week's storms will be the last storms of the state's traditional rainy season. As this rainy season comes to an end, it is highly unlikely that precipitation totals will increase significantly over the coming months. This winter's below average rain and snowfall worsens conditions in this third straight dry year.**

Snow survey: The most recent [snowpack survey](#), conducted on April 1, recorded California snowpack at 32% of normal. A more [recent update](#) using automated devices shows snowpack at 21% of normal as of April 27.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of April 26 remain low, including: Don Pedro 53%; Exchequer 27%; Folsom Lake 55%; Lake Oroville 53%; Millerton Lake 42%; New Melones 39%; Pine Flat 29%; San Luis 47%; Shasta 53%; and Trinity Lake 53%. An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The California Department of Public Health is providing technical and funding assistance to help several communities facing near-term drinking water shortages and is monitoring water systems across the state to determine where else it can provide support. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website.

Fire Danger: 1,108 fires have been reported across the state since January 1, burning 2,541 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 500 wildfires, burning 1,325 acres. 68 new wildfires were reported over the past week, most of which were kept small due to additional firefighters, fire engines and firefighting aircraft added during this dry winter. Cal Fire has increased staffing levels across California, in most areas one to two months earlier than normal.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST WEEK

State Actions

- **Governor releases Proclamation on a Continued State of Emergency:** Governor Brown released an [Executive Order](#) on Friday enabling several urgent actions to be taken as the drought persists into the state's traditional dry season. The Executive Order's directives include:

Water Transfers:

- Expedites state approval of water transfers, which allow water to flow where it is needed through the sale of water from willing sellers to willing buyers. CEQA review is waived for transfer applications and the required public comment period for the approval of waivers by the State Water Board is cut in half.

Emergency Drinking Water Projects

- Construction of emergency drinking water connections and other projects to ensure continued drinking water supplies is fast-tracked by waiving these projects from CEQA review.

Protection of Fish and Wildlife:

- Immediately initiates monitoring of winter run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River and other fish species impacted by drought.
- Expedites habitat projects that will protect drought-impacted fish by waiving CEQA review of these projects.

Water Conservation:

- Calls on all California residents to avoid wasting water by not washing sidewalks and driveways with water, turning off fountains, limiting lawn and outdoor plant watering to two days a week, and washing cars at car washes that use recycled water.
- Prohibits Home Owner Associations (HOAs) from fining residents who conserve water by reducing lawn watering and pursuing other water conservation.
- Urges schools, parks and golf courses to implement water use reduction plans.
- Asks restaurants, hotels and other businesses to build awareness of the drought and reduce water usage by measures such as only serving water upon request.
- Directs the State Water Board to ensure that local water agencies are taking actions to minimize wasteful water use among their customers.

Wildfire Suppression:

- Streamlines homeowners' efforts to clear trees and brush from defensible space surrounding their homes by waiving the need to first receive CALFIRE approval.
- Streamlines purchasing rules for CALFIRE and the Office of Emergency Services to speed purchase of important equipment for wildfire suppression and drought response.

Recycled Water Projects:

- Directs the State Water Board to adopt new guidelines that make recycled water projects easier to develop and construct.

This executive order follows on the [Governor's Initial Proclamation of Emergency Drought](#) issued on January 17. The directives outlined above will be implemented immediately.

- **Groundwater report to be released this week:** The Department of Water Resources will release a report on Wednesday (April 30) that charts changing groundwater levels, land subsidence, and agricultural land fallowing as the drought persists. The report, which was called for in the Governor's first [Proclamation of Emergency Drought](#) on January 17

(Directive 11), will identify groundwater basins with water shortages and detail gaps in groundwater monitoring.

- **State agencies fast-track water transfers:** State and federal agencies are streamlining their approval of temporary water transfers, including consolidating review of transfer applications. Due to recent increases in water allocations to state water project contractors, increased water transfers are expected. On Tuesday (April 29), the State Water Board and the Department of Water Resources will hold a [public meeting](#) to solicit additional input on how to streamline water transfers.
- **State Water Board funds replacement drinking water for economically disadvantaged communities:** \$4 million in funding was approved last week by the State Water Board to ensure communities in need receive interim replacement drinking water. This funding, which comes through the Water Board's Cleanup and Abatement Account, is available through flexibility provided by the state's emergency drought legislation that makes it easier to work directly with local governments, nonprofits and tribal communities to meet this challenge.
- **Input requested for on-farm water conservation funding:** The California Department of Food and Agriculture has scheduled a final stakeholder meeting to collect input on how to disburse \$10 million for on-farm conservation improvements this year. The funding, which comes from cap-and-trade revenue, was appropriated through the state's emergency drought bill. This last stakeholder input meeting will be held in Tulare on Thursday, May 8.
- **Upcoming workshop on recent water operations:** The State Water Board will hold [a workshop](#) on Tuesday, May 6 to discuss actions that the Water Board has taken since February to provide flexibility to DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation in their water operations. These changes have been approved through modifications to Temporary Urgency Change Petitions, and are [described in greater detail](#) on drought.ca.gov.
- **Cost Data:** Cal OES continues to gather drought-related costs from state agencies and local governments, which is reported weekly to the Drought Taskforce.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 42 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, San Joaquin, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yuba
 - **Cities:** Brooktrails Township-Mendocino County, City of Willits-Mendocino County, City of St. Helena-Napa County, City of Calistoga-Napa County, City of American Canyon-Napa County, City of Santa Barbara-Santa Barbara County, City of Montague-Siskiyou County
 - **Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe in Humboldt County, Yurok Tribe in Del Norte County, Tule River Indian Tribe in Tulare County, Karuk Tribe in Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties, Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.
 - **Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), Twain Harte Community Services District, Carpinteria Valley Water

District, Sonoma County Water Agency, Meiners Oaks Water District, Mariposa Public Utility District, Montecito Water District, Goleta Water District, Georgetown Water District, Tuolumne Utilities District.

- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 25 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Kern, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

Governor's [Proclamation of Drought Emergency](#)
State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)
Local Government [Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)
California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)
California Department of Water Resources [Current Water Conditions](#)
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Department of Public Health, Drinking Water [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)
Small Business Administration Disaster Support: www.sba.gov/disaster